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June 8, 2011

Via E-mail
sue.foecke@legis.state.ia.us

The Honorable William A. Dotzler
Chair, Economic Development Budget Subcommittee
Senate Chamber
Iowa Capitol Building
Des Moines, IA 50319

Dear Senator Dotzler,

We in Dubuque firmly believe that the nonprofit arts and culture industry is an economic driver in communities—a growth industry that supports jobs, generates government revenue, and is the cornerstone of tourism.

Since 1995, first as a City Council Member and now as Mayor, I have seen the City Council's philosophy of arts and culture move from merely a quality of life issue, to a tourism and economic development issue. Dubuque is one of the most recognized art and cultural cities in Iowa, making a positive impact on economic development and attracting new business to Dubuque, most recently an IBM service delivery center yielding 1,300 jobs.

Dubuque's Comprehensive Downtown Master Plan, a community-wide consensus document, called for the formation of a cultural district, a well-recognized, labeled, mixed-use, compact area of a community in which a high concentration of cultural facilities serve as the anchor. Our present redevelopment of the Historic Millwork District into an arts, entertainment and historically preserved area is proof that the arts drive the economy.

We are always talking about recruitment and retention in Dubuque. What brings us here besides our jobs? What keeps us here? Arts and culture is a part that we weave into every presentation about what makes Dubuque a "first" or a "best" place to live, work, and play. Those are the words we use – and we use them frequently! The reality is that the arts represent tangible assets for the City of Dubuque and many other communities across the state.

For the last three years, a part-time Arts and Cultural Affairs Coordinator position has been partially funded through Iowa's Community Cultural Grant program. We have applied for 2012 funding as well. The progress the City of Dubuque has made during these three years would not have been possible without the grant, and may be jeopardized by specifically cutting the program's funding.

Because of having the Arts and Cultural Affairs position in place, the City of Dubuque is conducting two highly acclaimed studies during 2011 and 2012 pertaining to the art, cultural, heritage and historical preservation aspects of the Dubuque area. Both studies have been developed by Americans for the Arts, the nation's leading nonprofit organization for advancing the arts. We know the arts have an impact – now we want the hard data to prove it. Neither study has ever been conducted in our area before.

Dubuque is one of 200 study partners from all 50 states participating in the National Arts and Economic Prosperity Study IV, which will focus on the non-profit sector in the City of Dubuque and measure total dollars spent by Dubuque's arts and culture organizations, total dollars spent by audiences as a direct result of their attendance, number of full time equivalent jobs supported by arts spending, amount of resident household spending generated by arts spending, and the amount of local and state government tax revenues generated by arts spending. We expect impressive data. The last study demonstrated that nationwide, the economic impact of the arts was \$166.2 billion including:

- 5.7 million full-time equivalent jobs
- \$104.2 billion in household income
- \$7.9 billion in local government tax revenues
- \$9.1 billion in state government tax revenues
- \$12.6 billion in federal income tax revenues

The second study now underway is the Local Arts Index, being conducted with both the non-profit and for-profit sectors throughout Dubuque County. Dubuque has been selected to be one of only 100 communities and the only county in Iowa, Wisconsin and Minnesota participating in the study, an 18-month research initiative that serves as a complement to the National Arts Index. The index provides an evidence-based look at key issues, such as the growing number of artists and art organizations, changing audience demands, the impact of technology, personal participation, and the relationship to the arts and economy.

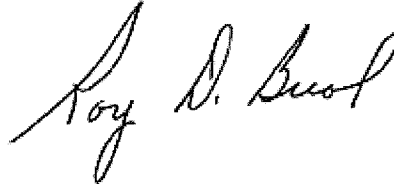
The entire community can use this broad and detailed hard data in grant making, advocacy, economic development, tourism and attracting people and business to Dubuque. We will have the ability to easily update the studies for benchmarking.

The Arts and Cultural Affairs Coordinator position, partially funded through an ICCG grant, is critical to the coordination and collection of the data and documentation for these two studies, which will serve as benchmarks for our entire region and the state.

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The arts remain a formidable industry in spite of our country's and state's economic challenges. I urge you to preserve the ICCG program as part of the budget of the Department of Cultural Affairs.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Roy D. Buol". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized "R" and "B".

Roy D. Buol
Mayor

RDB:jh